

# **Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service**

## **Puget Sound Pilots**



**Mr. Laird Hail**  
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**Capt Jonathan Ward**  
**President, Puget Sound Pilots**



# **VTS Mission**

- **Mission - VTS Purpose & Intent (33 CFR 161.1):  
To enhance navigation, vessel safety and marine environmental protection, and promote safe vessel movement by reducing the potential for collisions, grounding and loss of life.**
- **Averts approximately 40 accidents annually**
- **Assists in supporting all USCG mission areas including SAR, Law Enforcement, PWCS, and Pollution while working closely with SCC/JHOC.**



# VTs Management

**Continuum of Control: Monitor, Inform, Recommend, Direct**

Corresponds to the level of control exercised in the management of vessel traffic. VTS will NOT assume responsibility for vessel navigation.

- Monitor:**

**Collect, organize, display, analyze, decide**

- Inform:**

**Communication of timely, accurate and relevant info**

- Recommend:**

**Resolve, clarify, amplify, provide alternative courses of action**

- Direct:**

**Ensure regulatory compliance, minimize risk of collision/damage**

(Recommendations and Directions are given in the form of desired outcome)





# **VTS Regulations**

## **VTS Director Authority contained in 33 CFR 160.5(d)**

- Subject to the supervision of the cognizant Captain of the Port and District Commander, Directors, Vessel Traffic Services are delegated authority under 33 CFR 1.01–30 to discharge the duties of the Captain of the Port that involve directing the operation, movement, and anchorage of vessels within a Vessel Traffic Service area including management of vessel traffic within anchorages, regulated navigation areas and safety zones, and to enforce Vessel Traffic Service and ports and waterways safety regulations. This authority may be exercised by Vessel Traffic Center personnel.

# Shared Waterway Challenges

3500 sq. mi. AOR; 123 - 147 mile transits to ports

~10,000 Deep Draft Ship Transits per year

Alaskan Fishing Fleet Homeport; Significant Tribal Fisheries

1.3 Million Recreational Boating Population

4.1M TEU containers thru Seattle & Tacoma; 3rd largest in nation;

Located on 125 mile long International Border with Canada

14 tribal nations

15 Billion Gallons of Oil Moved Annually

USN Strategic Port - 3rd Largest Domestic Port  
- 7 Waterfront Facilities  
- 20+ USN Vsl Movements/mo  
- Escorts avg 10+ hrs

Washington State Ferry System  
Approx 500 transits per day  
22.5M Riders/year  
Cross traffic lanes

Growing Cruise Ship Industry:  
850K Passengers, 215+ arrivals

Designated Military Outload Port

2 National Marine Sanctuaries



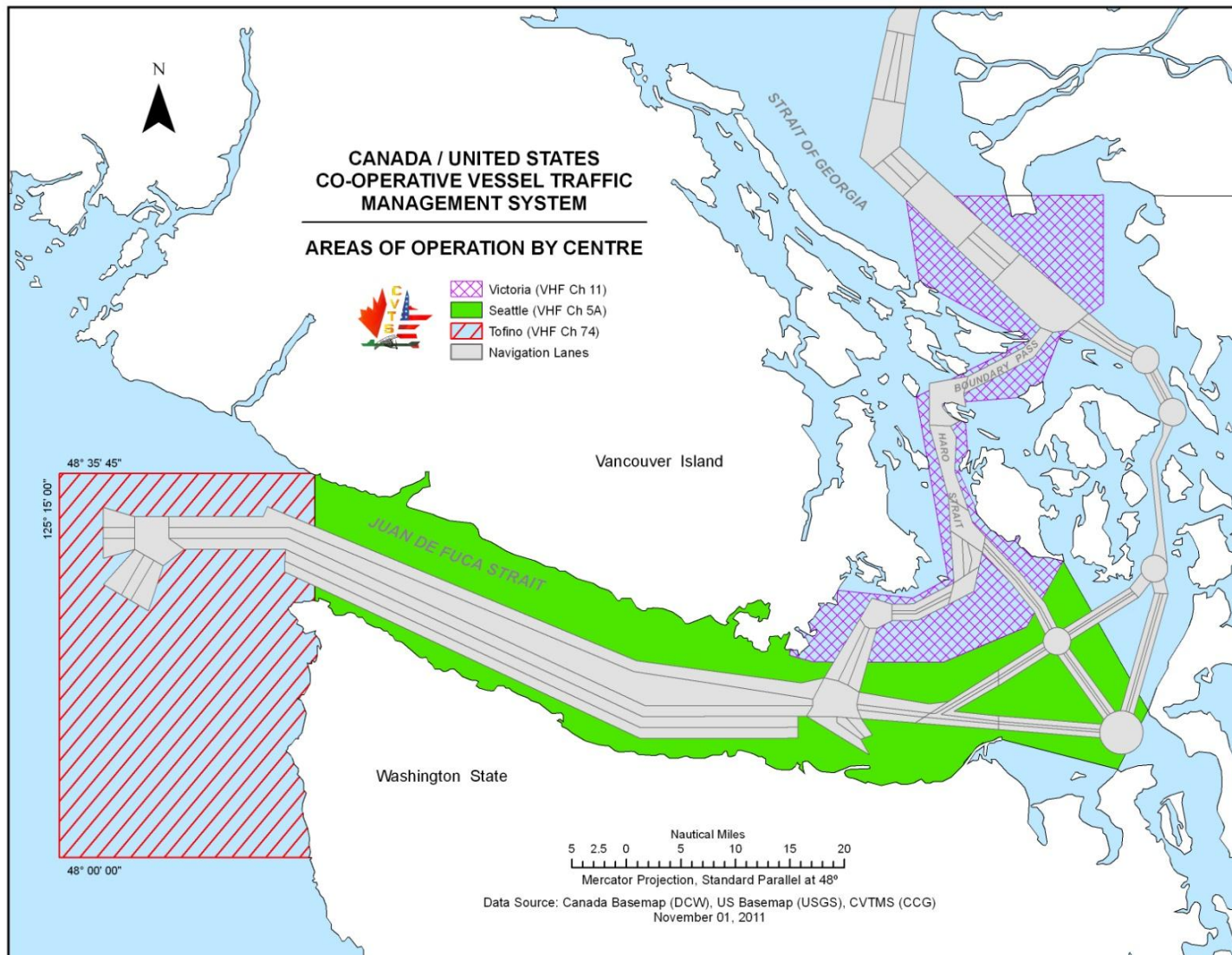
# Canada – U.S. Cooperative VTS

- International boundary complicates vessel traffic management
- Shared responsibility – U.S./Canada manages vessel traffic in a portion of each others' waters to provide seamless traffic mgmt along int'l boundary
- Each country's laws and regulations continue to apply in their waters





# Canada – U.S. Cooperative VTS



**Tofino**  
CH 74

**Victoria**  
CH 11

**Seattle**  
"North"  
CH 5A

# **VTS Sectors** **U.S. and Canadian**

**Seattle**  
"Straits"  
CH 5A

**Seattle**  
"South"  
CH 14

**Seattle**  
"Deep South"  
CH 14







# **VTS Operational Roles**

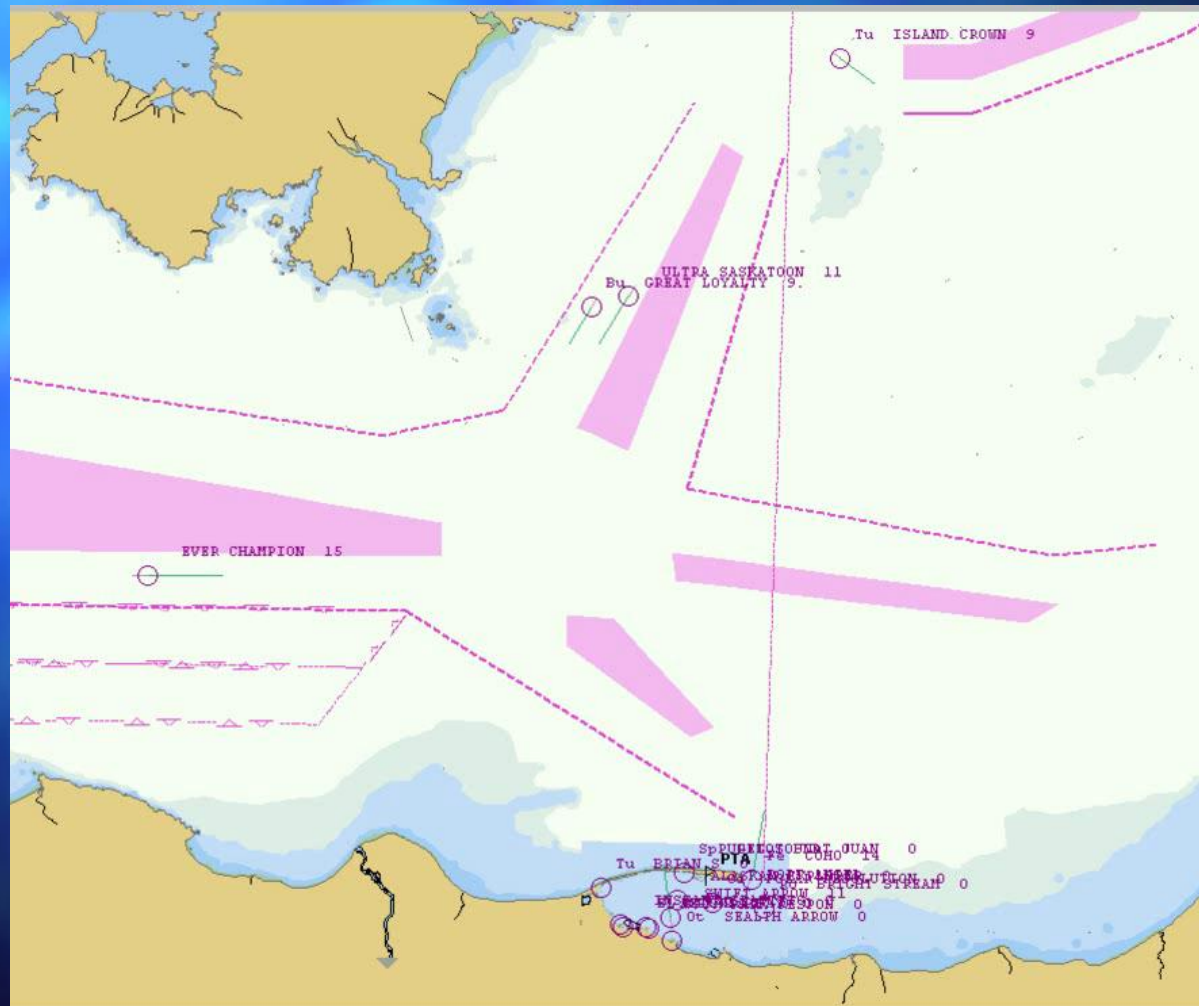
- **Order and Predictability of traffic flow**
- **Anchorage Management**
- **Relaying COTP Orders to VTS Users**
- **Safety/Security Zone and RNA enforcement**
- **Vessel Casualties/emergencies**
- **Pilot/tug employment**
- **Tanker movements and tug escorts**
- **USN high value unit escorts**
- **Restricted visibility and wind advisory/warning procedures**
- **Hazard and AtoN discrepancy reporting**
- **Marine Event Coordination**
- **Fisheries (WDFW and Tribal)**
- **Coordination with SCC/JHOC; eyes and ears for COTP**

# Order & Predictability Issues

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- Not following TSS
- Not following Rules of the Road
- Lack of communications
- Port Angeles rotary

# Order & Predictability Example







# VTs Regulations

## 33 CFR 161.5 – Deviations

- Long term or anticipated before transit: Written request to District Commander
- Developed during or immediately preceding transit: Verbal request to VTS Director (delegated to VTS Watch Supervisor in Traffic Center Manual (TCM))
- Legacy VTS procedure required “VTS Commanding Officer” authorization for Special Area transits when hazardous vessel operating condition exists – **Remains a COTP level decision**



# Special Areas

- Rosario Strait (to include Guemes Channel, Bellingham Channel, Padilla Bay, Samish Bay, & Saddlebag route)
- Turn Point (Haro Strait & Boundary Pass)
- Special provisions
  - One way traffic
  - Escort requirements
  - Passing restrictions
  - Advanced approvals

# Puget Sound Pilots



## Capt. Jonathan Ward





# Resources



- VTS User's Manual
  - [www.uscg.mil/d13/psvts/docs/userman032503.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/d13/psvts/docs/userman032503.pdf)
- Pilots Guidelines
  - [pspilots.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Guidelines-July-29-2014.pdf](http://pspilots.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Guidelines-July-29-2014.pdf)
- Standards of Care
  - [Part of the Harbor Safety Plan found at www.pshsc.org](http://www.pshsc.org)



# Questions